

*Saskatchewan
Rural
Telephone
Companies
Association*



*Minutes of
1955 Convention*

The annual convention of the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Telephones was held in the Bamboo Gardens of the Marigold Cafe in Saskatoon, on July 11th, 1955.

The meeting was opened at 11.15 a.m. by the president, Mr. Frank Randall. He said that he was pleased to announce that the Minister of Telephones, Mr. A. G. Kuziak, would be the special convention guest and who would be prepared to discuss any problems with the delegates. Mr. Randall then stated that if during the year any member company came upon a problem of importance, they should inform him of it and he could, in turn, call a meeting of the executive, who would then determine whether to request should go to Regina. He continued that during the past year no such requests had come to his attention. Mr. Randall announced that membership had increased, and that he was especially pleased in having the Saskatchewan Government Telephones and the Saskatchewan Timber Board as members. They were members without voting powers and paid membership fees of \$150.00 and \$50.00 respectively. Things were running smoothly for the Association. The financial position was solvent, but we should have many more companies, in fact all rural companies, members of the Association so that it could be of still greater value to the member companies. This way member companies bear the financial burden, yet all companies receive the benefits. They should help along. The Association could do more, provided that the total income of membership fees was considerably larger. All and every member company should endeavour to obtain at least one new member each year.

He announced the following agenda, convention guests and speakers, as follows:—

1. President's report.
2. Reading of the 1954 convention minutes.
3. Appointment of the Resolutions Committee.
4. Hon. A. G. Kuziak, Minister of Telephones.
5. Mr. S. R. Muirhead, Deputy Minister of Telephones.
6. Mr. Clark, General Commercial Superintendent.
7. Mr. W. A. Sheardown, Divisional Superintendent in Saskatoon.
8. Mr. T. E. Cavanaugh, Superintendent of Rurals.
9. Mr. Stevenson, Workmen's Compensation Board.
10. Mr. Kalmakoff, Manager of the Saskatchewan Timber Board.
11. Mr. Fraser, representing the Chipman Chemical Company.
12. Mrs. F. Stacey, Deputy Mayor of Saskatoon.
13. Mr. C. V. Sutton: progress report on problems with oil companies.

14. The Association's audited financial report.

15. Elections, 1956 convention place, etc.

16. Adjournment.

Moved by Meota and Nipawin companies that copies of the minutes of the 1954 convention be distributed for study during the luncheon recess, and that they could then be accepted as read. Carried.

Moved by Star City and Manitou Lake that the president appoint the resolutions committee. Carried.

Appointed were:

Mr. M. Fritshaw, Tisdale, chairman.

Mr. C. V. Sutton, Marshall.

Mrs. V. Pierce, Saskatoon.

The chairman then introduced Mr. Kuziak, the Minister of Telephones. The Minister opened his address by stating that it was a great privilege for him to attend this convention for the first time. He also brought greetings from his government colleagues in Regina. He commented on the convention's heavy agenda and said that he was looking forward to listening to the discussions this afternoon. Mr. Kuziak then said that he was somewhat familiar with the problems of rural telephone companies, as some years ago he had served as secretary-treasurer in the Canora area. He likened the rural problems to those which the Saskatchewan Government Telephones was facing. Mr. Kuziak then gave a brief historical sketch of telephone development in the province. He stated that during the 30's, little was done in improvement, repair, or expansion of communication. Then came World War II and the Korean conflict. Since then rapid strides have been made in expansion of this communication system. In the last few years the system had been expanded at a rate thought impossible before. Over a period of four years the system had been doubled.

The chairman thanked Mr. Kuziak for his informative address and introduced the next speaker, Mr. S. R. Muirhead.

The Deputy Minister said that he greatly appreciated this opportunity to address the meeting, and he looked forward to spending this one day each year with the rural delegates. He continued that such meetings are highly valued by him because by listening to the problems of the delegates much useful information is obtained. Mr. Muirhead suggested that if he could be given some advance notice of the problems to be discussed, it would help help him a great deal.

Following Mr. Muirhead's address it was moved by Manitou Lake and Briarlea that we adjourn to reconvene at 1.00 p.m. Carried.

The meeting reconvened at 1.10 p.m. with Weldon and Briarlea moving that the printed minutes of the 1954 meeting be accepted as read. Carried Unanimously.

Mr. Randall introduced the first speaker of the afternoon, Mr. Clark, General Commercial Superintendent. Mr. Clark expressed his appreciation for the invitation extended to him to address the delegates. This was the first meeting he had attended and he felt that by listening to the problems and discussions he would be able to offer some constructive help.

The Divisional Superintendent in Saskatoon, Mr. Sheardown, said this was the second annual convention at which he had been present. He told the delegates how much he appreciated this privilege. Last year, he continued, he commented on the fine work that the secretaries of the rural companies were doing and he wished to reiterate this praise again this year. He concluded by stating that he would give careful attention to the convention discussions.

The next speaker, Mr. Cavanaugh, Superintendent of Rurals, expressed his pleasure at being able to be at another convention and perhaps helping to solve some of the problems the rural companies were up against. He spoke on the question of special levies, stating that only 150 companies were taking advantage of the full 8% levy. Most companies, however, were employing the 1, 2, or 3% special levy. He then stated that there are still too many accidents in Saskatchewan. He felt that there should be some inspection of the tools being used by the linemen. As a representative of the Workmen's Compensation Board would speak on safety, Mr. Cavanaugh concluded his remarks.

Mr. M. Kalmakoff, manager of The Saskatchewan Timber Board, said this was the first time he was able to attend. He stated that the Board's main interest was in supplying telephone poles to the companies. His firm appreciated this business very much and hoped for a continued growth in this business. Whilst their poles have been mostly creosoted up to now, he hoped that shortly they would have available poles treated with Pentachlorophenol. This is a salt treatment which leaves the poles quite clean, thus making it easier for those who work with them. He spoke of the importance of ordering the proper size poles. Their poles were cut according to the sizes designated by the Canada Standards Association. Mr. Kalmakoff concluded by stating that the aim of his company was to provide poles to suit the needs of their customers.

Mr. Fraser, representing Chipman Chemical Company, stated that instead of taking up time in the convention, he would be prepared to discuss brush control and related problems with any delegates.

Q:—How does our rural telephone system compare with other provinces and the States?

A:—Mr. Cavanaugh: the Saskatchewan system of rurals is equal to any on the con-

continent. The bulk of the Manitoba rural telephones are one wire, and they are now spending millions to install the two wire system which is used in Saskatchewan. The rural system in Alberta was for a time administered by the province, but this did not work out to advantage, and the system was sold back to individual companies.

Q:—What is the Micro-Wave system?

A:—Mr. Muirhead: It is a means for the use of radio in creating telephone signals. The term micro-wave is derived from the fact that high frequencies and short waves are used. The waves are so short that they are related to light and they travel in straight lines. As a result stations must be set up at such distances that it is possible to see from one to the other. The chief practical application is for creating blocks of circuits over long distances. The micro-wave system is expensive to install; but additions to it are reasonable. A trans-Canada system is planned to span the country from the Atlantic to the Pacific and will transmit television, telephone, etc. So far contracts have been let for ten or twelve of the installations involved. There will be links from Winnipeg to Regina in two years.

Q:—Will there be any interference from electrical storms?

A:—The system is very free from interference.

Q:—Will we be able to dial long distance directly to the other party and how will the charge be made?

A:—Sometime in the future the customer will be able to dial their own long distance calls. In the United States, a few years ago, the American Telephone Company set up an experimental scheme in New Jersey, in which many difficulties of the system were worked out. We expect to have equipment of this kind in Regina perhaps in 1958 or 1959, although there will be no direct dialing by customers; only station to station service. In the matter of charges, everyone will have a number which will not be duplicated anywhere else in North America. A machine will record who called who, and how long the conversation lasted.

Q:—Will this system do away with tributary offices - that is local agencies?

A:—In the long run it probably will.

The president then asked if any delegate had any further questions to put to the minister.

Mr. Sutton asked under what act does the regulation for clearance come?

A:—The fundamental control is in the Telephone Act, but the Department of Telephones can make regulations about clearance and these have the effect of the Act. Mr. Muirhead added that he could not hand the delegates any one booklet in which all the acts and regulations were consolidated.

Mr. Sutton then presented a report on the clearance problem. He said that the problem was growing throughout the province. His company was located in the "black" oil field area; and they were constantly plagued with oil drilling rigs and equipment damaging or breaking down lines while moving to new leases. When the oil companies were "wild-cattin'" it was not too great a problem. When a line was damaged a bill of expense was sent in. However, the companies were now consolidating or filling in the quarter sections. He then described the difficulties his company was facing by tracing the problems his company had with circuit six. He felt that many of the problems with oil companies could be lessened if there was incorporated into the act something definite on clearance - that companies should only have to provide one legal egress per section of land. He concluded that if some such regulations were incorporated in the Act they would know exactly where they stood and what they could do in regard to the oil companies.

Mr. Kuziak in reply assured the delegates that the matter of clearances would be looked into.

Another delegate, Mr. Howes, spoke next on the problem of dealing with oil companies. He stated that it was important by negotiation to come to a working agreement with the companies. He said that there were situations that no regulation could completely cover and felt that this matter could best be settled locally.

Mr. Sutton then reiterated his earlier stand, asking why there should be this need of negotiation if something specific on clearance was in the Act?

The convention delegates then reviewed what action had been taken on the resolutions made at last year's convention.

During this review and discussion the deputy mayor, Mrs. F. Stacey, arrived. She was presented to the meeting by Mr. Randall. She expressed her pleasure at being able to represent the city at this gathering. She brought wishes for success to the convention from herself and the other members of the council. Mrs. Stacey explained to the delegates the use of courtesy parking stickers for delegates and visitors to conventions. She then extended an invitation to all present to visit the Western Development Museum. She added that her brother, Mr. Roy Potter, was instrumental in founding the museum. Mrs. Stacey hoped that delegates and their families would find time to avail themselves of Saskatoon's parks and the picnic facilities the parks provided.

Mr. Stevenson representing the Workmen's Compensation Board had arrived and was introduced to the meeting by the chairman. Mr. Stevenson said that this was the first convention he had the privilege to attend and was

very pleased to be present. He stated that his talk would center around the problem of accidents. In 1946 rural telephone companies were brought under The Compensation Act. He then went back over the years and reviewed the sums paid in by rural companies and what The Compensation Board had paid out to cover accidents:

1949	R T C	\$12000.00	C. B.	\$19000.00
1950		12000.00		20000.00

After this year the rates were raised and are now 25 cents per instrument.

1951	R T C	15000.00	C. B.	10000.00
1952		15000.00		19000.00
1953		15000.00		8000.00
1954		15000.00		*11000.00

*up to the end of June.

Upon conclusion of this survey, Mr. Stevenson stated that **unless accidents decrease** the present rate may be increased. He added that the average accident rate was 40-45 per year. Most of the injuries sustained were due to pole accidents or broken poles. He then read some of the reports that had come in on the accidents. He concluded by emphasizing the importance of reporting every accident, no matter how small, to the Compensation Board. What may appear to be a small injury can develop into a very serious thing. He told the delegates that he had brought along a film, "Miracle in Paradise Valley", in which safety measures were brought out. The delegates agreed that seeing this film would be worthwhile, and arrangements were made to view it at the conclusion of the meeting.

Hereupon followed another question period during which the delegates discussed the question of special levies and aired their difficulties affecting collection of long distance charges.

A delegate asked Mr. Muirhead about damage caused to lines by construction companies working on the gas pipe line. Mr. Muirhead said he was sure they would be reimbursed for any damage caused. Mr. Kuziak stated that he would look into the matter if there was any difficulty.

Delegates then discussed the question of long distance calls from schools. They had met some difficulty in collecting these charges because bills did not come in until after the teachers had left and the school units did not feel responsible for these charges. Mr. Muirhead replied that the school boards did have a responsibility in meeting the bills as they had hired the teachers. His department's stand was that the subscriber was responsible for whatever happened over his phone. Mr. Clark said that the companies could get a statement of account from the agent before the teacher left and settle the matter this way.

Delegates then put questions to Mr. Kalmakoff, manager of The Timber Board. He answered queries about the new pentachloro-

phenol treatment. It was a pressure treatment of poles and was proven in laboratory testing, though there were no records yet of how these poles stood up under practical conditions. The cost was the same.

Hereupon the financial statement as prepared by G. W. Barrett and Company was read:

Statement of Receipts and Expenditures:

For the period of July 1, 1954 to June 30, 1955

Receipts

Membership Fees	\$353.50	
Sask. Gov't 'Phones	150.00	
Sask. Timber Board Honorarium	50.00	
Exchange added to cheques received on acc't of mem- bership fees	1.55	
Over-deposited on July 10, 1954	4.25	
	<hr/>	559.30
Bank Balance, July 1, 1954	\$460.31	
Dominion of Canada Bond	50.00	510.31
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		\$1,069.61

Expenditures

Directors Travel Expenses	\$413.90	
Printing, Postage and Stationery	126.50	
Secretary Salary - Balance 1953-54	25.00	
Steno. Services	10.00	
Hall Rent - Club 400	35.00	
Audit Fees	7.50	
Bank Service Chge.	1.56	
Exchange - Cheques	7.00	
	<hr/>	\$626.46
Bank Balance, June 30, 1955	\$393.15	
Dominion of Canada Bond	50.00	443.15
	<hr/>	<hr/>
		\$1,069.61

Moved by Viscount and Wadena Companies that the financial statement be accepted and filed. Carried.

Mr. Fritshaw, chairman of the resolutions committee, then presented the resolutions for the convention's consideration.

1. Be it resolved that the Department be asked to set up an apprenticeship system for rural telephone companies who train operators. This aroused much discussion and questions, following which North Forres moved that the resolution be amended to read: Be it resolved that the Department of Labor be asked to amend the Apprenticeship Act to set up an Apprenticeship system for rural telephone com-

panies who train telephone operators. Motion as amended - - Carried.

2. Resolved that the regulations regarding minimum clearances for rural telephone companies be incorporated in the Rural Telephone Act; and that such regulations state very clearly that only one legal entrance to a quarter section be the responsibility of the rural telephone company; and that any additional entrance be chargeable to, and the responsibility of those using such private entrance. Carried.

3. Resolution by Star City: Be it resolved that due to the fact that at the present time long distance calls from staff exchanges to rural subscribers at agency exchanges are put through using the agency exchange operators' time and the rural telephone lines free of charge, that the Saskatchewan Government Telephone System be asked to pay the rural companies a commission on these calls. Very much discussion. Motion lost.

4. Resolution by Star City: Be it resolved that due to the fact that considerable damage is caused to telephone and power lines each year by irresponsible persons shooting or breaking off insulators; and not only does it cause trouble, but it costs telephone and power companies thousands of dollars each year for insulators and replacement costs. That the authorities be asked to have all .22 calibre rifles registered and that each person having such a gun be required to have a permit to carry and use it. That ammunition for .22 calibre guns should not be sold to persons under the age of 18 years and that any person buying such ammunition be required to sign a declaration that he or she will personally see that it will not be used for destroying insulators. There was considerable discussion. Mr. Kuziak stated that legislation of this type would be impractical. It would mean a lot of regimentation and would not solve the problem. He said that education and talks in the schools would seem to be a more practical solution to the problem. Motion lost.

5. By the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Telephone Linemen: This association requests that the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Telephones approve and assist in setting up a superannuation scheme similar to that of The Saskatchewan Government Telephone System, except that the rural linemen would contribute 4% of their established salary and that the rural telephone companies would contribute a similar amount. It would have to be made compulsory for the linemen and companies to make contributions and the scheme would have to be handled by some Government Department, such as the Rural Department of Telephones or the Public Service Commission. After much discussion this resolution was withdrawn and the following resolutions substituted:

a. By South Melfort and Star City: Be it resolved that we delegates to the 1955 convention of the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Telephones go on record as being in favor of a superannuation scheme for the rural linemen employed by rural telephone companies. We further recommend that a committee be set up to consider and devise such a scheme and report to the Association's 1956 convention. Such committee to consist of a representative from the Department of Telephones, two from the Linemen's Association, and two from the executive of their association. Carried.

b. By Viscount and Kindersley: Be it resolved that the Saskatchewan Association of Rural Telephone Linemen have an efficiency certificate issued by the Department of Telephones. Carried.

Moved by Manitou Lake and Briarlea that G. W. Barrett & Company be re-engaged as auditors for the coming year. Carried.

Convention place for 1956: Prince Albert, Saskatoon and Regina proposed. Result of ballot - Saskatoon.

Elections: Mr. Muirhead, acting chairman.

Moved and seconded that Mr. Randall be president. No other nominations. Declared re-elected.

Moved and seconded that Mr. Fritshaw of Tisdale be vice-president. No other nominations. Declared re-elected.

Moved and seconded that all former directors present at this convention be re-elected. Carried.

Moved and seconded that Carl Runyan of Punnichy; W. H. Howes of Kindersley; D. T. Wilson of Shellbrook be elected directors. No other nominations. Declared elected.

Directors: 1955-56

G. H. Furneaux	Nipawin, Sask.
R. J. Greaves	Star City, Sask.
H. B. Polkinghorne	Marsden, Sask.
C. B. Sutton	Marshall, Sask.
M. Scramstad	Hendon, Sask.
W. G. Streeton, Sr.	Plunkett, Sask.
H. Yungwirth, Box 388	Prince Albert,
Carl Runyan	Punnichy, Sask.
W. H. Howes	Kindersley, Sask.
D. T. Wilson, Box 83	Shellbrook, Sask.

Mr. Randall announced that the newly elected officials would meet briefly here in the anteroom immediately after the convention.

There being no further business it was moved and seconded that this meeting be adjourned. Time 5.45 p.m. Carried.

President

FRANK RANDALL

Box 833, Tisdale, Sask.

Sec.-Treas.

J. M. STROEDER

Pilger, Sask.